

MINUTES OF THE
WEST LAFAYETTE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
September 19, 2003
Amended

Redevelopment Commission members present: Steve Belter, Patsy Hoyer, and Barbara Cook. Also in attendance: Clerk Treasurer Judy Rhodes, City Attorney Bob Bauman, Development Director Josh Andrew, Charlotte Martin of the Development Department, Parks & Recreation Superintendent Joe Payne, City Council member Patti O'Callaghan, Tom Gall of TJ Gall & Associates, and citizens and members of the media.

Mr. Belter called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Belter stated that the first item of business is the authorization of the trustee to pay claims. Mr. Gall was asked to give updates on the trails project.

Mr. Gall stated that they are continuing to work towards completion in the Research Park. They are trying to complete the last segment along the west side of the Research Park and Kalberer. That's where most of their efforts are going right now. They have a few signs left to finish and the rest of the trail segments. We don't have the full final detail, but we've scheduled an official type of opening on October 15th. Mr. Payne stated that it's at the end of the workday. We haven't decided exactly where. It may be at a couple of locations. Mr. Gall stated that we are in the process of modifying the trail schedule of the final segment, which is the segment of the other side of Morehouse Road heading up to Hadley Lake. We've seeded a lot out there so we'd like a moderate amount of rain so that the straw can turn green around the trails. The shelters are up in Cumberland Park. Mr. Payne stated that the two shelters in Cumberland Park will be reservable but they are not yet. We probably will begin that in October.

Ms. Cook made a motion to authorize the trustee to pay claims. Mrs. Hoyer seconded. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.

Mr. Belter stated that the next item of business is the discussion of the Levee Development Plan Report.

Mr. Andrew stated that we hired Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne, DLK Architects, Parsons Transportation Group, and Williams Economic Analysis Group to look at the Levee as it is and then to make some prognostications about how it could be developed over time. This was to coordinate with what is happening at Wabash Landing so that we stay somewhat coherent in our development down there. It involved roughly 18 people on the advisory group as well as citizens from West Lafayette including property owners, elected officials, and staff from my department and Wastewater. They looked at the next 5 to 15 years. They looked at 8 different areas in the Levee and in those areas they determined what type of development should take place there and over what time frame that should take place. They also looked at transportation and traffic counts. They did a

market analysis in which they recommended that we might want to look at a grocery store. We might want to think about offices, but if we think about office it should be meant for (multi) stories. We might want to think about condominiums. We should think about retail on the first floor with multi stories so that it has that urban look. They also recommended that we go ahead with Tapawingo going north as major transportation. It would open up Levee Plaza. We also need to have ties with Lafayette through the river.

Ms. Cook asked if the property owners were there too and how they accepted this and what was their participation. Mr. Andrew stated that they were all invited to every meeting that we had. The Levee Plaza owner attended one meeting, a meeting with his representatives, and a special meeting with him and the consultants one on one. That was the extent of his involvement.

Ms. Cook stated that this weekend she went back to the very beginning of the Redevelopment Commission when we were trying to figure out the TIF and so forth and what we did at that time was that we all brain stormed about what we would like to do. It was neat to re-read that to see what we had done and what we haven't done. One of the things that concerns me about the current Wabash Landing and the plans is that there doesn't seem to be very much public space. I think that when Mr. Renfro came up with his design for Wabash Landing, as I recall, it had a little plaza area and a fountain and I don't see any of that in these plans. I don't see any spots where citizens could gather in the daytime or around a small fountain or somebody could have a small band playing. Mr. Andrew stated that we hope to do that once we finish Scotty's. Mr. Belter stated that once the building is done, the plaza area between Scotty's and Borders will provide more for that kind of thing. Tapawingo also provides some of that. Mr. Andrew stated that Brown Street will also provide that with the overlook. We are looking at some property north of Brown Street for public use. Ms. Cook stated that it's important to have some greenspace in the middle of all those buildings and some place for people to gather. I don't mean to be critical; there are a lot of really wonderful things going on down there. I just didn't see anything for it when I went back through to the beginning.

Mr. Belter stated that as opposed to Ms. Cook who has a wonderful view of the larger picture, I was reading through this and wanted to make a recommendation that we look at improved pedestrian crossings for River Road and a number of other places. If we wanted to replace the walk/don't walk signs with the variety that has the countdown timer on it, which would give the pedestrians a better idea of whether or not this is a good time to walk or wait, would we have to replace the entire signal or is that \$100,000 or \$10,000? Mr. Andrew stated that it is about \$1,500 to \$2,000 for the counter. Mr. Andrew stated that it would be roughly \$8,000 for an intersection. We've just started looking at that out there because it is extremely difficult to get across State Street. Ms. Cook stated that it would really be nice if we had an overpass to walk. Mr. Andrew stated that we looked at that out here on Sagamore West and the committee as a whole didn't feel that was something that would work because it's very expensive and it's very vulnerable for someone to try to go over. That's the reason why we concentrated on the intersections; trying to make them more pedestrian friendly and make the drivers more aware that this is a pedestrian crossing. You'll see in the next month the installation of the crossing on Tapawingo with the aircraft landing lights and the overhead signage.

Mr. Belter stated that he remembers discussions 10 to 12 years ago that there was a discussion for Purdue about overhead walkways and the advice that came back from

people who had built them was that they rarely get used unless there is something about the terrain that forces you to use them. Purdue does have some but they connect buildings. I've seen a number of places, in regards to the countdown crosswalk, in larger cities that have a landing in the median so that you are only trying to cross half the street at a time.

Mrs. Hoyer stated that she was looking at the projects and the sequence. I looked closely and then glanced through the standards for new development. My thought at the time was almost as if they were fairly daunting. What are we going to do next about talking with the property owners? I was impressed last night with the suggestions for Sagamore Parkway in terms of a business association. Also, where are we on our way-finding project? Mr. Andrew stated that we are waiting on specifications from Rowland Design. In terms of Wabash Landing, we are getting ready to go out for bid for the monument sign. The signs that are internal are Mr. Renfro's and he is working with them on those.

Mr. Belter asked Mr. Payne to go over what he has planned for the improvements to Tapawingo Park. Mr. Payne stated that, hopefully, within the calendar year we've completed the connection to the trail that's scheduled as long as the weather cooperates. It's connection on the easement that exists by the piece that comes to the road that leads into Waterfront Apartments and goes all the way under Harrison Bridge to the north and around the Wabash pond to North River Road at Williamsburg on the Wabash Apartments. Tying that piece together is the piece that will be redone. Hopefully, our contractors will get started later this month to do the storm-septors in Tapawingo Park, make the connection up to Brown Street. Then there would be a continuous 8 foot asphalt trail that would lead all the way through North River Road to South River Road through Tapawingo Park by Riverside Skating Center. We need to redo the utility building. In doing that, it will provide us with additional storage for equipment that we don't have enough space for in the skating center pavilion as well as storage for the child care center. The part for next year will be finishing the overlook at the end of Brown Street as well as realigning, repainting, and doing some curb work. Beyond that, we've all discussed the possibilities for the business properties along the river and trail. Those aren't definite detail plans. We have plans for further developing our master plan for Tapawingo Park. We would like to redo the playground in the park. It's heavily used and it's an older playground in a small location. Those are the short term items.

Mr. Belter asked with the skating rink being there, do we not have space for basketball or volleyball down there anymore? Mr. Payne stated that we may still be able to maintain space for volleyball. That was always popular in the past. When I think about what you see there now, the long term will be better use of the site once we get the storm center work done. There will be some additional trails that were designed with that. Having an outdoor venue, better landscaping improvement of the playground, trying to maintain the volleyball, and accommodating the festivals are our best views at this time. We do have grant funds that we need to get around to proceeding to closing out. Some of our older grants have been carried forward to try to solve some of the problems in the Levee but everything has been interactive there. Completing the trail is $\frac{3}{4}$ reimbursable.

Mrs. Hoyer asked who uses the playground equipment. Mr. Payne stated that the college kids use that area on a daily basis, not so much the playground though. The trails are very busy. That greenspace is really attractive. We've just opened back up for inline skating season and we have some rentals booked. We are getting more and more people

who have their skates that want to use the inline skating surface because it's so smooth and easy. With the playground, you can see it being used more monthly, if just for the area being next to the river and everything else that's going on down there.

Mr. Andrew stated that the Downtown Business Center is also involved in trying to bring more and more things over to our side of the river.

Mr. Belter asked if the pedestrian bridge in Tapawingo *will* provide a reasonable expansion area for the festivals that are held in Lafayette. Mr. Andrew stated that if and when it is built, definitely. In the interim, they will still use that parking lot and we will still probably be on the short end of the stick. Once that is constructed, they will be on our side of the river. We need to think about how we are going to incorporate the park and Wabash Landing as well as Brown and Tapawingo. We may even think of closing Tapawingo as part of the venue down there.

Mr. Payne stated that is one of the biggest problems thus far, that it is so easy to close off part of downtown Lafayette from vehicle traffic. If you tried that now in the Levee, you'd really have to retrain people which way to go if you shut down Tapawingo between State and Brown for the festival site. It's pretty hard to get in and out of the garage.

Mr. Andrew stated that it's surprising how many people are down there every evening. More people are coming over to our side of the river. Mrs. Hoyer said that even kids are doing it.

Ms. Cook stated that she thinks it would be fun in the summer time when it's warm and there are activities going on in Tapawingo Park with vendors selling hot dogs, cokes, popcorn, and things like that. Mr. Andrew stated that for home game weekends you have a captive audience because if you stay at the Hilton, you have to book both Friday and Saturday nights. On Friday, there is nothing going on and it would be wonderful if we could have a venue going on with mimes, music, and something going on our side of the river.

Mrs. Hoyer stated there is a business association but we don't know how strong it is. Mr. Andrew stated that they generally come together when there is a problem. US 231 brought them together as a group. Mrs. Hoyer stated that it would be nice to reconnect with them and see where they are with things. Mr. Andrew stated that the DBC is doing that. They are reaching out to the Levee merchants. Tena Walker is going around meeting with them periodically. The intent is to have them join the DBC and be a part of it.

Ms. Cook stated that she doesn't understand how you can even get started without a lot of commitment from the Levee Plaza owners to do something. It seems like we don't have a lot of control over it. Mr. Andrew agreed. Mr. Belter stated that Levee Plaza is the largest parcel down there, but it's not the only place. Mr. Andrew stated that you still have the other side. Mr. Bauman stated that there are also properties north of Brown Street that are not on the same ownership.

Mr. Belter referred to the map on page 30, saying that we've got Mellow Mushroom going in at the corner of Howard and Brown. In parcel G, Bruno's is the only property that has been upgraded. We've got some work going on in parcel F. Who knows

what our opportunities are in the future with parcel E. Dr. Weida's property could be the location of the next huge development. There's nothing critical timing wise. Hopefully, we can be ready anytime Dr. Weida decides that he's ready to do something but he isn't ready now.

Ms. Cook stated that when she thinks about that area, it just seems sort of impossible but I suppose that's what people thought about Wabash Landing too. It seemed more possible though with the Sears building because we were able to buy it. Mr. Andrew stated that it was a very wise investment.

Mr. Belter stated that we have a couple of relatively sharp triangles down there. There's the point of State and Brown and River Road that has an old gas station. There's also a former gas station that is now the Hairman at the corner of Howard and River Road. If we used standard zoning, the set backs associated with being off those streets almost eliminate putting anything there except for telephone booths. Mr. Bauman stated that it has been zoned CBW down there now so it isn't a problem. Mr. Belter stated that it was his recollection and the nature of his question. What does that imply? Mr. Bauman stated that there is no set back requirement in the CBW zone. It's a central business zone allowing building on the street. Mr. Belter stated that for example then on Mr. Weida's property, the Hairman at Howard and River Road, he could build out on the Howard Avenue side to where the sidewalk would go along there, but how about River Road. Mr. Bauman stated that there is no zoning restriction but I don't know how much right of way the state has. Mr. Gall stated that this is still a pretty small property. With the CBW, you can build a larger building but you still need parking. The landscape ordinance ties into how much space you need in terms of tree requirements and things like that.

Ms. Cook asked how big the Mellow Mushroom is going to be in comparison with Bruno's. Mr. Gall stated that it is just under 5,000 square feet. It's not a real large building. I don't know how big Bruno's is. Mr. Andrew stated that it will also have outdoor seating. We wanted the outdoor area in order to generate interest and activity.

Mr. Belter asked about sidewalks. Mr. Bauman stated that when Pete's remodeled, they put in sidewalk. It is part of the pedestrian way. Mr. Belter stated that I assume that you would have to look at them lot by lot. Mr. Bauman stated that the problem is going north from Bruno's. That is an area we can look at addressing.

Mr. Gall presented a site plan and conceptual drawing for the Mellow Mushroom.

Mr. Andrew stated that you'll also have outdoor seating at the corner of State and South River Road with the Bill Fleischhauer's project. The building will be four stories of apartments with the first story of retail. There will also be a two level parking garage behind it. Mr. Belter asked if he has filed for building permits or do we know when he's going to start construction. It looked to me like he is putting in foundations. Mr. Andrew stated that he has put in the wall. We've had preliminary meetings. Mr. Gall stated that what he's put in is a retaining wall to stabilize. Mr. Bauman stated that the process in terms of the amount of time and engineering that's gone into that is a pretty substantial commitment.

Mrs. Hoyer asked what our next step is here. Mr. Belter stated that his observation and the frequent approach of the Commission is to be opportunistic. When a property

owner or a developer has plans and it's something that makes sense for the City to participate in, that tends to come back to us. The purpose of this report was to give us some guidance. Mellow Mushroom comes to us and wants to put this up; we can stop and think if this fits into our overall plan for the Levee. Mr. Bauman stated that he believes that there are some specific ideas that we've brought to you in terms of some additional riverfront land. I think to some extent, you also have to be open to the opportunities to do something when a developer wants to. They work on the same opportunistic basis in terms of having the opportunity to lease a major commercial space. Mr. Belter stated that if Mr. Weida was to do the kind of development that was suggested in here, it could be very positive for him financially, more so than the return that he is getting on his current investment. That doesn't mean though that today or next week or next year is the point in time that is right for him that he has the time to work on it or the interest.

Ms. Cook stated that she wanted more information on the overlook and its size. Mr. Payne stated that we are going to clean it up and peel the asphalt up and put a new concrete deck on it and make railings and site furnishings to match the plaza around the skating center which ties into the pedestrian bridge to help give the flow of public space. It will extend out. The concrete will actually stick out where the abutment comes up. It probably won't be quite as large as the entire middle belvedere on the Myers Pedestrian Bridge. It will be a more intimate space about two thirds that size.

Ms. Cook asked about the Purdue Crew. Mr. Andrew stated that we are in the process of going after an IDEM grant to do additional studies on the property. We have permission from the property owner to do that. We are going to take the property through Brownfield, which means that if the City does buy it, we have the ability to transfer the title to somebody else. We are working with the University, CDC, LUEA, and the Chamber on this. It will not be just a Purdue project. This will be for the citizens of Tippecanoe County and will house two or three different clubs and we'd like to have a restaurant on top. Mr. Belter stated that we are at the brain storming and investigation stages as opposed to having any plans yet. Mr. Andrew stated that we own that property to the north which affords that property access to the river.

Mr. Belter stated that some pretty amazing things have occurred in the past 15 years when the Commission began in 1987. Ms. Cook stated that one of the items that we had talked about then was doing the space between Purdue on State Street down to the bridge and how you could combine this into a sort of overall package somehow. We talked about having park benches up State Street and maybe having banners you could put out at certain times for festivals.

Mrs. Hoyer stated that there has been a lot of talk about art work. At one point downtown was looking at being involved with a 9/11 structure. Some people have suggested with beautification work that we should start thinking of some of this art work to be throughout the City. Putting in things now like the electricity and water for somewhere in the future in order to have the ability to access things like Lafayette did with lighting the trees.

Mr. Belter asked if there were any other questions or discussion on the Levee Development Plan. None were made.

Mr. Bauman stated that at the next meeting we will be asking for an additional appropriation of money to take care of some of the items that we've talked about before, including the Brown Street Island in front of the theater, the garage security, the utility and storage shed in the park, Heritage Trail completion, and the pedestrian way for Scotty's. Mrs. Martin also mentioned the KCB appropriation as well. Mr. Bauman stated that it is the final payment for Lindberg.

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for October 17th at 12:30 pm. The Commission asked if Mrs. Loerbs-Polley could check with the other two members to schedule November's meeting for either the 17th or the 24th.

Mr. Belter asked if there was any public comment. None was made.

Ms. Cook made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Hoyer seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis Earle Nay, Recording Secretary

Approved:

Stephen Belter, President

/clp

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.